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tional policy of the party, but expediency demanded it. The Republican party declared for local option by counties, and thus the issue was joined, not on the question of local option or no local option, but on the question of the unit to be used in local option elections. The campaign was well advanced when Governor Hanly called a special session of the legislature. Among other things he recommended a county local option law and after a sensational fight, it was enacted by a close vote on September 26, 1908, a little over a month before the election in which that very question was the issue. The law enacted differs only in details from the Ohio law. Twenty per cent of the legal voters is required for a petition and the limit for another election is two years. the law expressly continues in force the local remonstrance law against the sale of liquor. At this writing (December, 1908), 55 of the 88 counties of Ohio have gone dry and several elections have been ordered in both Ohio and Indiana.

JOHN A. LAPP.

Old Age Pensions—English Act of 1908. According to the opinion of the Earl of Roseberry, the most significant piece of legislation passed by the English parliament since the reform act of 1832, is the old age pension act of August 1, 1908. It is important from the standpoint of social or reform legislation, since it is the realization of a policy to which both parties were pledged, and of a hope which has been strong in the minds of the English almost continuously since 1893.

From 1893 to 1895, the royal commission on the aged poor, under the chairmanship of Lord Aberdare, investigated the question of old age pensions, but reported adversely "in view of the financial and economic difficulties involved." Likewise the committee on old age pensions (1896-98), with Lord Rothschild as chairman, investigated the plans for a pension scheme which were submitted to it and reported negatively on the proposition. Several bills dealing with the question were introduced in 1899, and in April of the same year a select committee on the aged deserving poor was appointed. The committee reported favorably for a pension scheme with 65 years as the age limit, to apply to British subjects, and to vary from 5s. to 7s. per week, at the discretion of the committee, according to the cost of living. Criminals, people who had received poor relief, or had an income of more than 10s. per week, were to be excluded from the provisions of the bill. Their favorable report was conditioned, however, by a recommendation for the reform of the poor laws upon which, in their minds,

the success of their pension scheme rested. A departmental committee on aged deserving poor, 1899–1900, was appointed to consider the financial aspects of the proposed bill of the select committee of 1899. In the succeeding sessions of parliament, following 1900, several bills were introduced, and the aged pensioners bill of 1903 was reported to parliament, from the select committee of the house of commons, to which it had been referred, without amendment. The details of the bill seem to have been the stumbling block. Again the question was taken up during the session of 1907. Intimation was given in the speech from the throne, January 31, 1908, that an old age pension bill would be introduced by the ministry, and the matter was fully launched on May 7, 1908, when the budget was introduced by Mr. Asquith.

The bill as outlined by the prime minister, varied materially from the bill that passed. Mr. Asquith ruled out all contributory plans; refused to consider the universal scheme associated with the name of Charles Booth because of the costs—£16,000,000 to £17,000,000 he estimated; made plain that the burden must rest on the imperial treasury and not on the locality; pointed out that certain discriminations must be made in the matter of age, means, status, and character, as well as in nationality, and that the pension should be 5s. per week, excepting for married couples living together, when the combined pension should be 7s. 6d. per week for all those fulfilling the statutory conditions, who did not have 10s. or upwards weekly income. The modifications in the original measure made in the house of commons will be evident in the review of the bill itself as passed.

The old age pensions act provides for the payment of a pension to all persons who have attained the age of 70, who have been British subjects for 20 years next preceding the date of the receipt, and whose yearly income does not exceed £31 10s. The act applies to both men and women, and, in the case of married couples, the nationality of the husband determines that of the wife. Claims are made upon uniform schedules gratuitously furnished by the government through the post offices, to the local pension officers—the excisemen—who in return report thereon to the local pension committees.

The rate of pension is fixed on a sliding scale and ranges from 5s. to 1s. weekly. The following is the schedule:

MEANS OF PENSIONER.	RATE OF PENSION.	
	s.	d.
When the yearly incomes		
Do not exceed £21	5	0
Exceed £21 12s. 6d. but do not exceed £23 12s. 6d.	4	0
Exceed £23 12s. 6d. but do not exceed £26 5s.	3	0
Exceed £26 5s. but do not exceed £28 17s. 6d.	2	0
Exceed £28 17s. 6d. but do not exceed £31 10s.	1	0
Exceed £31 10s.	no pension.	

The pensions are to be paid from funds appropriated by parliament, as are also the expenses of administration. The plan is non-contributory and differs in this respect from the old age pensions law of Germany, where the employer and employee contribute equally to the fund, which together with a subsidy for each annuity of \$12.50 from the government, is administered by insurance societies in coöperation with state administrative bodies, all under the imperial government. A comparison of the laws in the two countries can scarcely be made, for Germany really provides for a form of industrial insurance, compulsory on all, with minor exceptions, while England confers an out and out pension as a reward for past service. It also differs from the old age pension law of Denmark, passed April 9, 1891, in that it does not require the localities to bear a part of the expense. In Denmark it is shared equally between the central government and the localities.

As to the probable cost of the pension system, during the first year of its operation, Mr. Lloyd-George, chancellor of the exchequer, said in the house of commons, July 23, 1908, that it would amount to about £6,500,000. Mr. Asquith gave it as his opinion that the maximum number applying for the pension during its first year would not exceed 500,000. Up to October 10, 1908, the number of applications were, for England, 273,862; for Ireland, 131,610; for Scotland, 49,077; for Wales 13,615; total 468,164.

The receipt of a pension does not deprive the pensioner of any "franchise, right or privilege, or subject him to any disability," and in this way differs from the receipt of poor relief.

A claimant must satisfy the pension authorities: (1) that he is 70 years of age or over and may make use of a birth certificate baptism or marriage certificate or "any other evidence which appears sufficient for the purpose; (2) that he has been a British subject for 20 years next preceding the receipt of the pension, and that his residence has been in the United Kingdom except in the case of temporary absence,—

the latter to include absences caused by service in the army and navy, etc., but for other causes the absences combined must not exceed eight years. A person being a pensioner is deemed to have been temporarily absent if his absence does not exceed three months at any one time; (3) that his income is not sufficient to exclude him from the benefits of the law. In calculating the income of a person account is to be taken of what the person may reasonably expect to receive in cash (this is to be ascertained, in absence of other means by the amount actually received during the preceding year); of "advantages" coming from property owned, and of the "yearly value of any benefit or privilege enjoyed." The pension officers have been furnished with elaborate instructions from the commissioners of inland revenue as to the method of determining an applicant's earnings.

The receipt of poor relief at any time since January 1, 1908, and until December 31, 1910—the latter unless parliament otherwise determines—or the receipt of poor relief while one is a pensioner disqualifies one from receiving, or from continuing to receive, an old age pension. Poor relief in the form of medical or surgical assistance, or in such form as would not disqualify one for registration as a parliamentary elector, etc., is, however, an exception. One who habitually fails to work for his own maintenance, or for the maintenance of those "legally dependent upon him," is disqualified. It is provided, however, that if a person for ten years up to his attaining the age of 60 has made provision against sickness, accident, old age, etc., by contributing to friendly societies, etc., the above disqualifying circumstances will not apply. This provision extends to the wife as well as to the husband in the case of married couples. Persons who are convicted for an offense, the punishment for which is imprisonment, are disqualified while so held, while persons of 60 years of age or over who are liable to have a detention order placed against them, under the inebriates act of 1898, may be disqualified by the court for a period not exceeding ten years.

All pensions are paid weekly in advance by means of a book of pension orders, and through the post office selected by the pensioner. The Treasury reserves the right to make payments at periods either less or longer than a week. The pension commences to accrue on the first Friday after the claim is allowed. In Germany, under the contributory plan, the pension is not paid until after 1200 contributory weeks, or approximately thirty years, and is then paid, as in England, in weekly installments.

The method for determining claims for pensions is as follows: Claims when made out are delivered either to the pension officer or to the postmaster of the office where the payment is desired. The postmaster is required to give such information as is within his power to the claimant when making out his claim, and in the absence of any instructions from the local pension committee, is required to send the application direct to the pension officer, who is required to keep a register of all claims, together with an account of all decisions of the local committees or the local government board, and "as soon as may be" after receiving a claim, to investigate it to determine the right of the person to a pension, and the rate to be allowed in case such claim is valid. A report is then made by the officer to the local pension committee, which after considering the report and any other information, if necessary, decides upon the claims. The pension officer is allowed to attend any meeting of the local committee, and "to speak but not to vote thereat."

Appeals to the local government board on the part of the pension officer or any claimants are provided for, but must be made within seven days after the decision, in the case of the officer, and within seven days after the receipt of the notices by the claimant. If the local committee refuses to investigate a claim, appeal may be made direct to the central authority and their decision is final. In cases where no appeal is taken the decision of the local committee is final.

The local pension committee is appointed for every borough and urban district of 20,000 population or over, and for every county (excluding such urban districts), by the urban and district councils and by the county council. A local pension committee is to contain not less than seven members, nor more than the number of the council by which it was appointed; and not less than three constitutes a quorum. The term of office of a member is three years or less, and is fixed by the council at the time of the appointment. Each committee has the right to appoint sub-committees, but when doing so is required to notify the local government board and the pensions office and to specify the area for which the sub-committee is appointed to act.

A penalty of imprisonment for a term not to exceed six months and hard labor is imposed upon a claimant for knowingly making any false statement which would entitle him to a pension or to a higher rate of pension; while the pensioner, or in case of death, his "personal representative" is made liable for the amount of pension received while the statutory provisions governing a pension were not fulfilled, or while a person was disqualified for receiving a pension, and the sums are to be recovered as "a debt due to the crown."

The act is also made to apply to Scotland, Ireland, and to the Isles of Scilly, by changing the wording to fix the circumstances in each case. It goes into effect January 1, 1909, and no pension begins to accrue until that time.

HORACE SECRIST.

Reservation of Mineral Rights in Public Lands. On December 9, 1908, Senator La Follette introduced a bill (S. 7369) "reserving from entry and sale the mineral rights to coal and other materials mined for fuel, oil, gas, or asphalt, upon or underlying the public lands of the United States" and further providing for "the sale of the surface" and for "the leasing of the mineral rights in such lands."

Licenses for raising coal or other minerals designated may be issued for a period not longer than thirty years and for areas not exceeding five governmental sections of land. But "no common carrier or association, any member of which is an officer, agent, or shareholder, or in any manner interested in the business of any common carrier" may hold a license under the proposed act. The bill further provides "that no person or association, corporate or otherwise," may receive licenses to more than one area; and no association, any member of which is a licensee or is interested in any association which is a licensee may be permitted to hold a license.

Definite provision is made for the payment of rents and royalties to the government. A rent of not less than ten cents per acre is required annually in advance, but the rent is to be abated by the amount paid in royalties and is to be wholly abated when the royalties equal the rent charges. In determining the amount of royalty to be paid the secretary of the interior is required to give consideration "to proximity to transportation facilities, to market conditions, and such other circumstances and conditions as affect the business." The bill also provides a minimum royalty "of not less than eight cents per ton on all coal or other mineral mined for fuel, and not less than sixty cents per ton upon mineral mined for hard asphalt, and of not less than fifteen cents per barrel of mineral mined for soft asphalt, and not less than one-sixth of the value of the product of any oil well, and not less than \$50 per annum for each gas well not utilized and at a rate of not less than one cent per thousand cubic feet of gas when the product of such well is utilized at the works, exclusive, however, of coal dust and coal or other mineral mined for fuel, oil, gas, or asphalt, used about the works."